

1905

A n E x h i b i t
o f J a p a n e s e
p r i n t s



A T T H E G A L L E R I E S O F
W a l t e r K i m b a l l
N u m b e r 3 1 B e a c o n S t r e e t

F r o m J a n u a r y 8 t h t o 2 1 s t E x c l u s i v e

-1905-

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M i s h i k i - p e

CHAPTER IV

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N i s h i k i - y e

UNTIL some twenty-five years ago, an art of a most esthetic people lay unknown out of the narrow limits of Japan — the art of nishiki-ye.

Through the efforts of Mr. Bing, Mr. Gillot, Mr. Goncourt, Mr. Hayashi of Paris, and Mr. Anderson, Mr. Holme, Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Strange of London, many examples were placed before the European art world.

They were eagerly bought for museums and private collections.

To the painters of later years, who have much to owe to these nishiki-ye makers, many names must be added to Whistler, Manet, Degas, Chavannes.

These nishiki-ye stand for simplicity, for the greatest results by the most direct means, for the impression freshly and strongly presented free from every unessential. Because of this they stand for force and power of expression. The nishiki-ye are made in this way :

The artist, on thin paper, makes his drawing. This is then pasted face down on a polished block of cherry, pear or apple wood, the side, not the end of the block, being used.

The engraver, a second man, cuts with a sharp knife on each side of the lines, and with a chisel gouges out all intervening wood. The block is washed and im-

pressions drawn showing the outline. These are sent to the artist. He plans his color scheme. Taking one outline print he fills in his green, for instance; another, he fills in his reds; another, he fills in his greys. These are each pasted face down on blocks and a series of color blocks are produced, one block for each color.

The printer, a third man, prepares his cups of color, sits on the floor with a block before him, — say the block for the green. Near is his pile of paper for the edition, slightly dampened, as in printing etchings. He lays his color on the block with a coarse brush. He places a sheet of paper on the block, a corner fits into a notch cut in the lower right hand corner of the block. A side falls on a line cut on the lower edge of the block. This simple means of registering is sufficient to print even ten or fifteen colors with remarkable precision.

A flexible bamboo rocker covered with a bamboo shuck is then rubbed over the back of the paper, and the impression is drawn. This process is repeated until the edition is printed in green. Then another color block is taken, and color added to color, and at last the outline is printed from the key block. A key block is shown in the collection.

KATSUKAWA SHUNSHO

1726-1792.

Pupil of Shunsui. A painter of rare color perception and power of composition.

1. Flowers.

TORII KIYONAGA

1742—1815.

Pupil of Kiyomitsu. "Kiyonaga easily has his place in the front rank of the artists of his time". BING.

2. The Lady.

KITAGAWA OUTAMARO

1753—1805.

Pupil of Sekiyen. An artist of great elegance and power. His color is fresh and pleasing and his line delightful.

3. The Young Soldier.

KATSUCHIKA HOKUSAI

1760—1849.

Pupil of Shunsho. One of the most virile of Nishiki-ye makers. "It is impossible to deny the evidence of one's eyes and not to recognize one of the world's greatest draughtsmen". HOLMES.

4. The Wave.
5. The Bridge. Okazaki.
6. The Carp.

KORIUSAI

Worked 1760—1780.

Pupil of Shigenaga. An artist of elegance and refinement.

7. Under the Lantern.

UTAGAWA TOYOKUNI

1769—1825.

Pupil of Toyoharo. A master of color and line. His early work is of rare distinction.

8. Cherry Time. Triptych.
9. The Orange Obi.
10. The Prince.
11. The Blue Kimono.

KIKUGAWA YEIZAN

Worked 1800—1830.

Follower of Outamaro. For purity of color and delicious color combinations few Nishiki-ye makers excel Yeizan.

19. On the Balcony.
20. The Yellow Kimono.
21. The Samisen.
22. Viewing the Iris.
23. Morning Glories.
24. The Writing Lesson.
25. Morning Snow.
26. The Geisha.
27. The Letter.

KUNIYOSHI

1797 — 1861

Pupil of Toyokuni.

28. Flower Picking. Triptych.
29. The Prince in the Boat. Triptych.
30. The Hawking Party. Triptych.
31. The Junk.

HIROSHIGE

1797 — 1838

A pupil of Toyohiro. Skilful in drawing either the figure or landscape, he is, however, best known to collectors as a master in landscape. With the utmost simplicity and charm he gives the subtle phases of nature — wind, mist, rain or snow.

- 32. Shinobazu Lake. Uyeno Park.
- 33. The Puff of Wind.
- 34. Kanda Myojin Temple.
- 35. The Picnic. Oji.
- 36. Evening Breeze.
- 37. The Temple in Snow.
- 38. The Fish.
- 39. The Ferry. Hiroshige and Toyokuni.

KIYOCHIKA KONDO

Died 1882.

- 40. Fireflies.

TORII KIYOMINE

1786—1868.

- 41. Key block for printing the outline.
- 42. Impression from 41.

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